

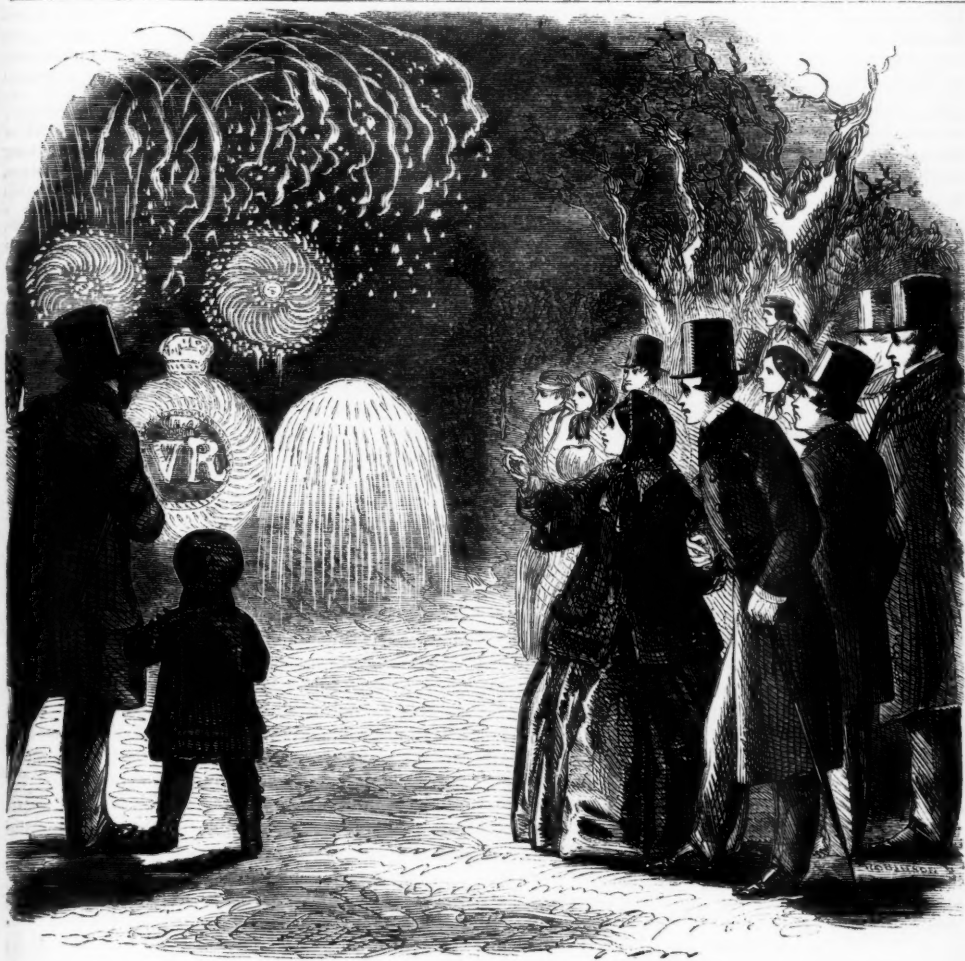
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GEOFFREY, PERCY, AND JESSIE WITNESSING THE PYROTECHNIC DISPLAY.

GEOFFREY THE GENIUS, AND PERCY THE PLODDER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ARCHIE CAMPBELL."

CHAPTER IV.

MANY times had Geoffrey Armitage availed himself of Mr. Needham's request that he would come and spend an afternoon with him whenever he was disengaged, and too often had the general invitation to dinner been made use of on a Sunday. It was No. 388. 1859.

not the mere fact of dining with a friend on that day which was reprehensible, especially when the acceptor was far distant from home and its social ties and duties, for there might have been pious people found who, in that case, would have well supplied the heart's yearning for parental or brotherly intercourse; but in this instance of Geoffrey's visits to Mr. Needham, they proved most frequently the time chosen for discussions of an

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entirely worldly nature, wherein the "god of this world" was brought forward in unhallowed pre-eminence above the "Lord of the Sabbath," and the hardened worshipper of Mammon did his worst to also indurate the conscience of his youthful associate. But sometimes Geoffrey could get away on other days, and then, unless he had an engagement for an evening's public or private amusement, he made the best of his way to Bellevue Lodge, in time to join the luxurious dinner-table of his friend.

A particular occasion called him there just now—letters and remittances had arrived from John Lister, the latter more ample than Geoffrey had dared to hope for. His heart beat with exultation: his *first* speculative venture had succeeded! He hailed it as an auspicious omen for the future; John spoke, too, of a small consignment which he felt sure would realize a handsome profit. How Geoffrey longed for the cargo of the "Santa Cruz" to be discharged, that he might obtain the package addressed to him. He *must* tell Mr. Needham of his good fortune; so, at six o'clock that evening, he presented himself at the elegant villa of his patron, and received his usual welcome; and when, after dinner, he made his communication, Mr. Needham was evidently pleased at his progress, especially when he added, with an air of humility—

"It is but a trifling transaction, but it will give me confidence to proceed."

"Quite right, quite right, my young friend," was the reply; "never mind its being a small affair to begin with; 'little fishes are sweet,' or you and I should not have enjoyed our whitebait just now: besides, even in this trifling transaction, it appears you have made thirty per cent., and perhaps may make it more when these drugs are disposed of. Ay, ay, you'll do very well, I can see; go on and prosper."

And, thus encouraged, Geoffrey *did* go on: and, can it be wondered at, that the fine-drawn line between fair investments and unjust advantage over a neighbour's ignorance or necessities, should be sometimes passed by one so eager to turn his small gains into large ones?

He had often repeated his solicitations to Percy to quit his country clerkship and join him in town; and when his second year of residence commenced, he added, by way of extra inducement, "Come and make up our old *clique* of Birchingdotians. Fraser is gone into Goodman's bank; Taffy Griffiths is article to Turot and Jobbam, of Lincoln's Inn; and Edward Averill comes of age in May, and intends spending a few months in town: we shall be complete if you will join us." But although he failed in his plans for Percival's advantage, he was still not unmindful of his own. The "merry month of May" had arrived; and certainly this year well deserved its title, for there had been bright skies, and gentle gales and "balmy influences" wafted on their wings, of which even the parched, dried-up Londoners had felt the benefit. Geoffrey had moved a little way into the pleasant suburbs of the great city, where flowering shrubs and shady trees would almost make the residents fancy they were in the real glorious country; and here he would

rise early, throw his windows wide open, and enjoy reading "The Times" whilst partaking of his substantial breakfast, with nearly the freedom of beautiful Nestlebury. The "City Article" and the "State of Trade" generally first engaged his attention; for, although not at present personally interested in the news that "Consols closed for account at" so and so, nor caring much individually that "cottons were feverish," "iron buoyant," "sugars dull," and "whiskies lively," etc., yet he knew many persons to whom such intelligence would be extremely important, and therefore he could give a shrewd guess at their consequent proceedings, which might be useful to himself or his employers; but, one morning towards the close of this said "merry month," Geoffrey had opened his paper, and turned first to an entirely different topic from that named above.

The day previous had been that annual scene of excitement, when half London seems to go mad upon one particular subject; when bankers forget their bill-books and their loans, the Exchange is nearly deserted, and even the business of the nation stands still, that peers and M.P.s. may join with the general populace in devoting the whole day to the indulgence of this yearly mania. One of the lengthy columns of the newspaper had been devoted to the details of the "Derby Day," and Geoffrey read it with some interest. It was not that he had been there, and wished to test the accuracy of the description: races were not to his taste nor to his principles: setting aside the moral view of the case, he could not recognise betting on horses as a legitimate speculation, inasmuch as it might be marred at any moment by the venality of a menial. Edward Averill had been with him the evening before this "mad meeting," and tried to induce him to join himself and a party to the Downs, but without success. He had, however, hinted that he might either win or lose a considerable sum on the event of "the race;" and to ascertain how matters probably stood with him, prompted Geoffrey's perusal of the paragraph. The list showed that Averill's favourite horse was not the victor, and Geoffrey was just uttering a half-audible expression of dissatisfaction, when a hurried ring at the bell was almost immediately followed by the sudden entrance of the young man of whom he was thinking. He looked pale and agitated, and returned Geoffrey's greeting briefly and abruptly, and then rapidly poured forth the reasons for his early and unexpected visit.

He had staked largely on what had proved the losing horse, misled by those whom he could now see were interested parties; but he had paid all his losses on the ground except one debt, which was to be settled that day, and—and—he hesitated—he was fifty pounds short of the necessary amount—could Geoffrey lend it him?

There had hitherto been a good deal of a patronizing air about Averill's intercourse with his former schoolfellow. As the son and heir of a baronet, he had always held himself somewhat above one whose father had made his money by trade, and who himself seemed destined to a like career; but, like other worldlings, he could play the agreeable when an object was to be gained

thereby; and now, as Geoffrey rather hesitated before replying to his request, he applied himself to flattering his weak points, that he might profit by their yielding to his oil and honey. His skilful allusions to Geoffrey's ample funds, present and prospective, and the clever way in which he seemed likely to increase them, were not thrown away. "Of course, my dear fellow, I shall pay you handsomely for the accommodation," sounded also very pleasant, and so Geoffrey's apparent scruples vanished, and he brought out the required sum from his writing-desk, and also a certain stamped little piece of paper, which made valid a promissory note, signed by young Averil for the repayment thereof at three months' date, to which was added a handsome bonus for the "accommodation."

"I shall not forget your good nature, Armitage, depend on it," was the gracious and grateful assurance of the future baronet; "and, as my father is in parliament, I may have an opportunity of doing you a good office in return."

Such was Geoffrey's first essay as a money-lender *de facto*; it was again like the taste of an inebriating potion, to which the treasured-up promise of future advantage and requital gave additional flavour and strength, and the resolution was made that he would omit no occasion to refill the chalice and repeat the draught.

It was a real old English Christmas that year—bright, cold, and frosty; the hollies had decked their glossy dark-green leaves with glowing bunches here and there of scarlet berries; the hips and haws hung thick upon the trailing branches of the dog-roses, and the bare branches of the once sweet may—a provident supply from Nature's hand for the feathered tribe in these cold months of winter. On the natal day of that glorious Being who gives the hallowed title to the season, the natural sun sent forth his beams—an emblem to the Christian's heart of that "Sun of Righteousness" which then arose upon the world; all was bright, joyous, glad-some, awakening gratitude to God, "peace, goodwill towards men;" and so throughout the week went on the cheerful sights without doors, the happy scenes within, until "the knell of the old year's death was drowned in the clash of welcome to the year just born."

Geoffrey Armitage came down, by his father's urgent request, to spend his Christmas as heretofore at home. He passed it happily—more so than he had anticipated; for, almost unconsciously, the quietude and serenity of the country exercised a healthful and refreshing influence over his worldly spirit. His sister was grown and improved; her pleasant looks and lively manners satisfied his taste; his father was even more than heretofore indulgent; his old friends at the cottage retained their truthfulness and regard; and when he met Percival on Christmas-eve, walking briskly toward his uncle's house, his greeting showed him still the frank, sincere companion of the school-days past. With more of genuine feeling than ever he had shown towards any of his London associates, Geoffrey pressed him to come soon and spend with him a long day, with which he complied; and when he left in the evening, the opinion formed of him by

his aspiring companion was thus expressed to his father:—

"Percival is a good fellow—that I shall always say—but very slow. He will never make his fortune by his genius: it will be grind, grind, grind to the end of the chapter with him."

"And you?" laughingly inquired his father.

"Flight upon flight, higher and higher, until I reach the pinnacle of success," answered Geoffrey boldly. "I have retained one French phrase out of all Monsieur Lemaitre tried to cram me with, which is, *qui le veut le peut*, and as I *will* to be rich, I *can* and *shall* be so."

"A happy new year to you," was a greeting soon passing between friends and relatives in social little Nestlebury; it was Percival's last day at home from business, and he wished to make the most of it.

"Can you spare me your company this evening, uncle?" he asked; "if so, we will return to Mr. Montague's after dinner. There is to be a lecture to-night at the Town Hall, on 'The sea and its inhabitants,' which promises to be both amusing and instructive."

"A happy new year to you all," interrupted the blithe voice of Jessie Armitage, before Uncle William could answer his nephew's request, as she and her brother entered their friend's cheerful room; "we are come to ask a favour; papa has promised to treat me and Geoffrey to something very wonderful to-night, if you will all go with us: just read this grand announcement;" and she unfolded a printed paper and put it into Mr. Belford's hands.

It was headed, in large characters, "Grand pyrotechnical display;" and such a succession of truly "blazing triumphs of art" were promised to the patrons of Monsieur Defeu, that it was not wonderful the youthful imagination of Jessie was fired as much at the description of the "golden fountains," "argus wheels," and "chameleon flower-pots," as their realities were to be by the fusée of the "grand maitre d'artifice." Uncle William looked from one to the other of his youthful pleaders, with a smile on his benevolent face.

"Which element am I to be the victim of?" he asked jocosely. "Percival wishes to plunge me into water, and Jessie has brought fire to thaw the frost of my anticipated refusal."

The question was amicably settled, by Percy withdrawing his own request, and supporting that of Jessie; and at seven o'clock the whole party again assembled, and walked to the bowling-green of the village inn, where Monsieur Defeu's exhibition was to take place. The night was clear and frosty, and the thousand lamps of heaven which hung aloft in the blue firmament, put to shame, in their enduring majesty, the evanescent brilliance of the fireworks; and Uncle William could not help the comparison arising in his thoughts, but still he could not withhold his admiration at the skill and art displayed in the arrangement and variety of the "standing pieces," and the beautiful combinations of colours which fell in glittering showers through the sky, as the rockets darted high up in the cold clear air, and burst above the heads of the

admiring spectators. Jessie was enchanted; she had never seen anything of the sort before, and her brother and Percival were loud in their applause. At length came the final *tableau*, where fiery wheels revolved, golden fountains poured out their shining streams, blazing serpents darted across each other in rapid sinuosity, and a flight of rockets shot hissing up into the sky, and burst, almost beyond the bounds of hearing, into dropping stars of green, purple, crimson, and gold. A shout of applause greeted this closing triumph of the artist's skill, and scarcely died away sooner than did the brief bright objects which had called it forth.

As our little party quitted the bowling-green, Geoffrey gave his arm to Mr. Belford.

"It really was very beautiful," he said, "and quite inspiring; it seemed to typify to what a height man's aims may be directed, and splendid results accrue."

"Yes," returned Uncle William drily, "but it may also point a moral, as well as give an impulse; many send up their glittering projects into the bright sky of hope and ambition, and bring no better returns than the scattered fragments and the broken stick."

There came a time when Geoffrey remembered Mr. Belford's simile.

PARLIAMENTS, LONG, SHORT, AND OTHERWISE.

THE late parliament had but a brief existence. It did not live to the second anniversary of its birth. Yet, under no circumstances has the legislative body any lease of life running for a longer period than seven years. If it survives the political storms that surely occur, and struggles through the interval, then the legal term for its duration is completed, and a dissolution takes place in the ordinary course of events, specially with the view of having the third estate reconstructed, according as the people may determine. Hence, a parliament approaching to seven years' duration is really an antique specimen of the genus, and may be compared to a man, who, having accomplished his three-score years and ten, is awaiting death from extreme old age. But it is rarely the case that septennial years are attained, owing to party contests and other casualties, which are fatal to the existence of current legislatures, often abruptly cutting short the number of their days.

It is the prerogative of the sovereign to dissolve parliament at pleasure, though never exercised now-a-days except under the advice of a responsible minister; and it necessarily ceases to be, whenever there is a demise of the crown. Thus, by virtue of the royal prerogative, ministerially wielded, the late parliament became extinct before it had quite completed its second year; and upon a comparison of two years with seven, it may be said to have perished in the very flower of its days, just when passing from adolescence to manhood, and therefore entering upon its prime. The event occasioned no surprise, for its constitution had evidently become rickety and spasmodic, while all its components were

strongly divided in opinion as to the proper regimen to be adopted—whether a stout well-flavoured Reform cordial and alterative should be administered, or a mere homœopathic dose.

Originally, and for a long period, there was no limit to the continuance of a parliament, except the will of the sovereign. But for some time its duration seems to have been confined to a single short session. Counties, cities, and boroughs, in obedience to writs of summons, elected representatives, who rode up to Westminster at a jog-trot pace, or wherever else the king might be, to give a respectful hearing to his wishes, and act the part of dutiful subjects. They despatched the domestic business in hand as quickly as possible—usually that of granting a subsidy, reduced in its amount, and presenting petitions setting forth grievances. But stubbornly they refused even to look at foreign affairs, grumbled if kept sitting longer than a fortnight, that being "to their great cost and damage," then made the best of their way back to their homes and callings, not again to serve in the same capacity, unless as the result of fresh writs and new elections. The first time a prorogation of the parliament actually took place, was in the fifth year of Richard II; and the first time any parliament was continued for so long a period as twelve months, was in the twenty-third year of Henry VI.

The Tudors, enabled by peculiar circumstances to rule despotically, convoked parliaments, kept them in being, and dispensed with them altogether, just as their own convenience and pecuniary condition dictated. The Stuarts did so likewise, yet not with the like impunity, as the times had changed, to the signs of which they were blind. Elizabeth maintained one of her parliaments for nearly eight years, and at three different periods, each of which had a duration of more than four years, she governed the country by her sole will. James I continued a parliament nearly seven years, and contrived to manage without one for upwards of six. Charles I never convened the estates of the realm for eleven years, while, for more than seventeen, Charles II kept a subservient legislature at his elbow. At last, the Revolution, which displaced the Stuarts, decided the question that England must be under regular parliamentary government; and by the Triennial Bill, in 1694, the duration of any one parliament was limited to three years from the day of meeting. The Septennial Bill, in 1716, lengthened the term to seven years, which, taking contingent circumstances into account, may be said to be neither long nor short. Since the beginning of the present century, seventeen parliaments have been held, averaging a duration of about three years and a half.

The "Short Parliament," as it is called in our records, was summoned by Charles I in 1640, after eleven years' intermission. It assembled on the 13th of April; and, with few exceptions, all men's hearts were gladdened by the return made to constitutional government. Along the great north road, there had travelled from the fen country, making their five-and-twenty or thirty miles a-day, Oliver Cromwell and Thomas Meautys, Esquires, the members for Cambridge. The former, only locally known as a farmer and man of mettle, now made

his second appearance in the House, voted, but did not speak. He was very ordinarily apparelled, in a plain cloth habit, which seemed to have been made by an ill-fitting country tailor, and wore a hat without a hat-band. The king opened parliament in person, and, after a few words, directed Finch, the Lord Keeper, to state the cause of summons. That worthy, in the course of his address, commanded the Commons to lay aside all other debates till the supplies were granted, and proceeded to say that "his Majesty's kingly resolutions were seated in the ark of his sacred breast, and it were a presumption of too high a nature for any Uzziah, uncalled, to touch it." But though in excellent temper, and liberally disposed, the Commons civilly declined compliance, and insisted upon giving precedence to the question of redress of grievances. In vain Charles claimed unconditional assistance, and pressed for money with all the anxiety of a man who has heavy bills on the eve of maturity, or an execution already upon his premises. It was not to be had, without some security for future good conduct; and finding, according to the old rhyme,

"There is nae luck about the house,
There is nae luck at a',"

the king dissolved it on the 5th of May, just after completing the third week of its existence. He almost immediately regretted the ill-judged step, wished to revoke his own act, and restore the defunct body by summoning its members to meet again; but of course this could not be done. Though short, this parliament is not the shortest on record, for Charles II may be said to have fatally nipped one in the bud, or crushed it in the germ. It met on the 21st of March, 1681, but had such unpromising features to the royal eye, with uncourtly gestures to boot, that he dissolved it in a huff, on the 28th, a week afterwards, and never called another.

The "Long Parliament," memorable for good and evil deeds, followed close upon the heels of the short one, as if to compensate for its brevity, assembling November 3, 1640, and keeping in existence, though in a wofully mutilated state, to April 20, 1653, a period of about twelve years and a half. Its early measures throw the highest lustre upon it; but, becoming violent and tyrannical, it justly underwent most ignominious treatment. Convened by the crown, and returned by the people, it placed itself above both, by declaring both Houses permanent till dissolved with their own consent. Yet, without consent being asked, it had to endure amputation of many of its limbs, and the remainder of the body suffered forcible ejection. It was first cut down to a fragment by the military intervention which acquired the name of Pride's Purge, from that of the commanding officer who superintended the process of excision; and finally, the surviving remnant, known as the Rump, or fag-end, was turned out of doors by the strong hand of Cromwell. Though long-lived, this famous assembly yields in point of duration to the first parliament of Charles II, which lasted from the summer of 1661 to the beginning of 1679, nearly eighteen years. It was hence called the "Standing Parliament," and also the "Pension Parliament," from the notorious corruption of its members. But there was one brave

and incorruptible man among them, Andrew Marvel, who has left on record a description of those with whom he had to sit, as placemen and pensioners, hungry expectants, men of infamous character, who ate at the expense of the court, and who, if they were not in parliament, must be in prison.

For a short time, in the year 1644, Charles I constituted at Oxford what he himself styled the "Mongrel Parliament," consisting of the lords and commoners who seceded from the one sitting at Westminster. But it did not in the least strengthen his hands, proved an irresolute body, and the king gladly dispensed with it as an encumbrance. Cromwell, while simply the lord general, in 1653, summoned a convention of notables for deliberative purposes, by writs addressed to them personally, without any popular election. This is known as the "Little Parliament," either from its paucity of members—about a hundred and fifty—or its meagre results; for, after sitting some five months, and proposing the most sweeping changes, it was dissolved without passing a single act. It is distinguished also as "Barebone's Parliament," a sly corruption of Barbone, the name of a busy member of it. But to Cromwell, during his protectorate, in 1654, the merit belongs of having constituted a parliament upon principles which posterity has, in the main, approved. He excluded inconsiderable boroughs altogether from the representation, granted the franchise to important places, and to persons in possession of a certain amount of property. Four hundred members were returned for England and Wales, thirty for Scotland, and thirty for Ireland; and thus was formed, for the first time, an incorporating union of the three nations, a prototype of the present imperial and reformed parliament. In exercising the power of arbitrary omission and summons, the Protector did what kingcraft had often done before him. "What," said James I, in answer to a remonstrance at a small operation of this kind, "if I had created four hundred boroughs? The more the merrier—the fewer the better cheer." In more remote times, it rested very much with the sheriffs to decide what towns should be represented in their respective counties. For five reigns after Edward III, the sheriff of Lancashire reported of that wonderful theatre of modern ingenuity and industry, "There are no cities or boroughs within the county of Lancaster, from which any citizens or burgesses ought, or have been accustomed, to come to parliament, or are able, by reason of their poverty."

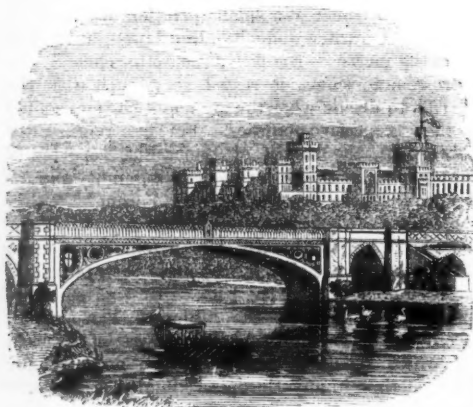
Having now got far back into the past, we may simply mention the "Blessed Parliament" of our annals, in the twenty-third year of Edward III, which obtained that name for defining, for the first time in any European kingdom, those acts against the state amounting to *lese-majesty*, thus depriving judges of the power of creating constructive treasons.

There was also a "Diabolical Parliament," under Henry VI, so called from the many cruel bills of attainder passed by it; a "Lack-Learning Parliament," under Henry IV, from which all lawyers are said to have been excluded; and a "Packed Parliament," under Richard II, when, previous to the elections, and with a view to influence them, all

the sheriffs throughout the kingdom were changed, and persons favourable to the crown appointed. There have been other examples of the latter kind. Recently, Sir John Pakington, at the Mansion House, proposed to call the late assembly the "China Parliament," owing to the circumstances under which it was convened, which, he thought, deserved to be broken, as a worthless piece of pottery.

With little ceremony, and often most ungraciously, parliaments were treated by the crown, down to the period of the Revolution. When unsubservient, they were lectured and browbeat, had their members sent to prison, and were dismissed with angry or contemptuous messages. Cromwell, in dissolving one, was simply plain-spoken. "I think it my duty," said he, "to tell you, that it is not for the profit of these nations for you to continue here any longer, and therefore declare that I do dissolve this parliament." But the process of dissolution, whether by the sovereign in person or by commission, is now conducted with delicacy, sparing to the feelings on both sides. Though all know, when summoned to hear a message from the crown, that their last hour as a legislative body has come, and that many who have been colleagues at St. Stephens will be so no more, they are treated precisely as if they were to go on meeting, speechifying, and voting as usual. Parliament is simply prorogued to a certain specified day, perhaps a month afterwards, and within a few hours the dissolution takes effect by royal proclamation. No reason for this appears, except that, as in social life it is disagreeable to state an unpleasant truth face to face, its communication is preferred by note.

WINDSOR CASTLE.



THE VICTORIA BRIDGE.

WINDSOR! How many associations of history and literature are conjured up by the name! The legends of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table may be fabulous, and Staines, not Old Windsor, may be pronounced by antiquaries the *Pontes* of the Roman road to Silchester; but we know that here was a favourite residence of the

Saxon kings of England, and that the castle, which has been ever since the seat of royalty, was built by the Normans before the Domesday survey. For eight centuries the annals of Windsor have occupied no unimportant place in the records of English history; and the castle of our own day is worthier than ever of the wish that Shakespeare uttered:—

"That it may stand till the perpetual doom."

We never approach Windsor by the South Western Railway, without thinking of Heidelberg. The favourite castle of our English monarchs—planted on a hill, its terrace crowning lovely slopes of garden ground and woods—calls to mind the once cherished home of the Electors Palatine, which, in like manner, rests in lordly magnificence over a delivly covered and enlivened by masses of foliage. The battlemented ridge here peeping above the tree tops, with faces looking down on field, and road, and river, is very much akin to that which surmounts the orchards there, where we have seen English tourists rejoicing in one of the most glorious of landscapes; and have talked with them of the fortunes of poor Elizabeth of Bohemia, who, as Ferdinand the elector's wife, and our first James' daughter, is a connecting historical link between the two edifices. Nor are the positions of the towns and bridges of Windsor and Heidelberg, in relation to the kingly halls and haunts—so long their chief attraction—much unlike. But, as in many other cases, when some few features of resemblance have struck the mind on a first survey, the comparison leads to a contrast; so, the similarity between these two places is accompanied by many points of difference. We miss at Windsor the noble heights of Heidelberg, ascending behind the palace. We miss the valley. We miss the hanging woods and vineyards. Nor is the royal borough internally at all like the German university town. And then, moreover, and so for ages may it be, while Heidelberg is a crumbling ruin, deserted of her princes, Windsor is in the perfection of its strength and beauty, its lawns ringing with the laugh of merry children round their royal parents, who there find a magnificent retreat and a happy home.

The north front of Windsor Castle, which fixes the attention of the traveller as he nears the railway station, is for the most part modern, being the work of Sir Jeffry Wyatville, who rebuilt the castle in the reign of George IV. Far different did he make it from what it had been left by Charles II. Though adopting a style of palatial architecture, imitative of Gothic grandeur, there is nothing in it now to call to mind what royal castles were in the reigns of the Edwards and Henrys. And when we are told of the hunting seat of William the Conqueror, which once stood here, we know it must have been about as unlike what we see now, as a loopholed tower on the Rhine in the seventeenth century was to the many-windowed palace of Heidelberg. The terrace at Windsor was raised by Elizabeth. In the year 1576, works were in progress. It was carried out beyond the castle wall, upon cantalivers of timber facing the hill scarp. Arches and buttresses of stone were built, making

a fence breast-high. Several chambers were discovered under the terrace a few years ago, showing the purely artificial character of this great adornment of the castle. Accounts of the operations and the expenditure have been preserved, and it would appear that then, as now, public functionaries were thwarted in their plans; for Humphrey Michell, clerk of the works, asked leave to resign his office, because of the delay in passing accounts and procuring money. However, he got his way in the end, as such gentlemen often do, and was appointed paymaster as well as inspector, with a salary of two shillings a-day. According to the report in 1577, the sum of £7800 had been laid out on the castle during the preceding seven years; £1800 having been spent on the terrace. And it was well spent. We like to read what Paul Hentzner said about this spot in 1608: "It is a walk of incredible beauty, three hundred and eighty paces in length, set round on every side with supporters of wood, which sustain a balcony, from which the nobility and persons of distinction can take the pleasure of seeing hunting and hawking, in a lawn of sufficient space. For the fields and meadows, clad with a variety of plants and flowers, swell gradually into hills of perpetual verdure up to the castle, and then at the bottom stretch out in an extended plain, that strikes the beholder with delight."

Queen Elizabeth was very fond of her new terrace. Here she would walk most days, and even when it rained she would brave the wet under the cover of an umbrella. One sees her, accompanied by a bevy of ladies and courtiers, ruffs, hoops, and embroidered petticoats, intermixed with satin doublets, bright-coloured hose, velvet cloaks, and gracefully plumed caps; at other times, there she is with a select few, Cecil, Leicester, Walsingham, and Essex, engaged in earnest conversation on state affairs, or indulging in courtly wit. And not unfrequently was she alone, with her gilt-bound prayer-book suspended from her girdle, her thoughts absorbed in the cares of empire or engrossed with other and softer subjects, which, notwithstanding her maidenly resolves, often agitated her bosom. The slightest inspection of the buildings on the north terrace will detect the portion of the castle which remains unchanged since the time of Elizabeth. The relics of architecture called by her name—once the gallery, now the library—are obvious enough, in contrast with Sir Jeffry Wyatville's constructions, while the initials of the virgin sovereign on the walls direct the attention of the beholder to the fact of her being the foundress of that portion of the palace.

Another queen, moreover, is particularly connected with what we are just now looking at. In that little oriel window at the corner, tradition says, Queen Anne was sitting at tea with the Duchess of Marlborough, when the tidings came of the victory of Blenheim. It is interesting here to read the missive—much in a little—scrawled on a leaf torn from the duke's memorandum book, and addressed to his "queen Sarah": "I have not time to say more, but to beg you will give my duty to the queen, and let her know that her army has

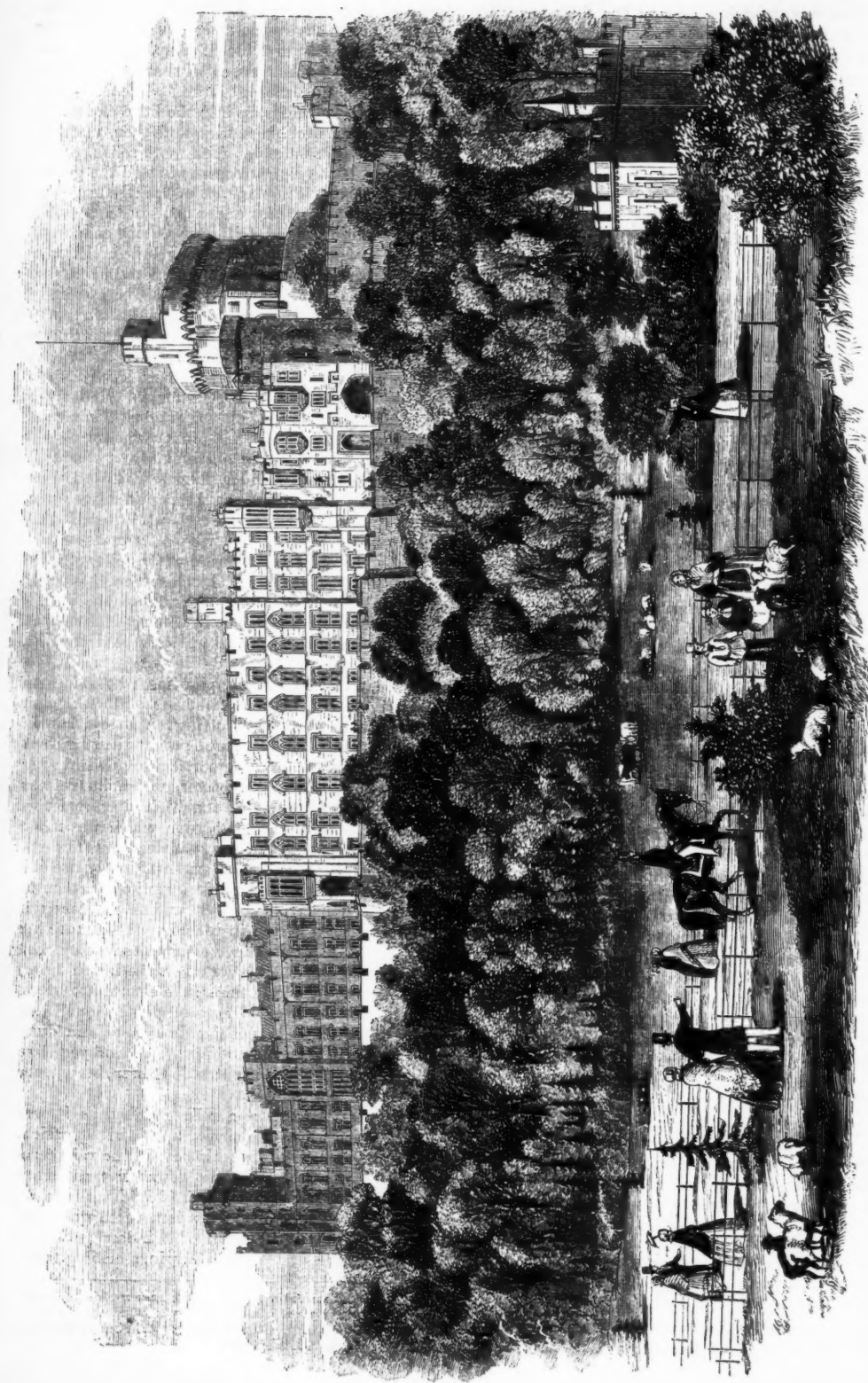
had a glorious victory: M. Tallard and the other generals are in my coach, and I am following the rest. The bearer, my aide-de-camp, will give her an account of what has passed. I shall do it in a day or two, by another, more at large." We fancy they had that trusty soldier up into the little closet, and listened eagerly to his stories, and then, when he was gone, drank more tea, with more relish.

As we are not going to repeat what all the guide-books say about Windsor,* let us quietly leave the bustle of the train, and wander beneath those noble elms, and sit down and talk over a story connected with this spot, little known amongst the multitudes who day by day run down in summer time to see the Castle and Virginia Water. There stands Travers College; it covers the ground of an awful tragedy, acted in the face of the sun, when Henry VIII sat on the throne of England.

There was a man named Robert Testwood, a London citizen, who was sent for to Windsor to join the choir, because of his voice and skill in music, but he was a Lutheran. At dinner with the chanting priests, in one of the old rooms that clustered round that chapel yonder, Testwood talked with freedom, inveighing against the pope's supremacy, which roused the wrath of a certain Master Ely, an old Bachelor of Divinity, who afterwards would point to him and say, "Beware of the fellow, for he is the greatest heretic and schismatic that ever came to Windsor." The abolition of the pope's supremacy soon afterwards, by Henry, in favour of his own, relieved Testwood on that score; but he got into a more serious difficulty, by his laughing one afternoon at the pilgrims who came to Windsor to visit Henry VI's shrine. He ridiculed their kissing spurs, and putting on an old hat, in honour of the saintly monarch; and "then he went further, and found another sort licking and kissing a white lady, made of alabaster, which image was morticed in a wall behind the high altar, and bordered about with a pretty border, which was made like branches with hanging apples and flowers. And when he saw them so superstitiously use the image, as to wipe their hands upon it, and then to shake them over their heads and face, as though there had been virtue in touching the picture, he up with his hand, in the which he had a key, and smote a piece of the border about the image down, and with the glance of the stroke chanced to break off the image's nose—"Lo, good people," quoth he, "you see what it is, nothing but earth and dust, and cannot help itself; and how, then, will you have it help you? For God's sake, brethren, be no more deceived."

Another time, upon a relic Sunday, as it was called, when every one carried a relic in procession, Testwood refused to take his part in the vain ceremonial, and spoke in terms of intense contempt of certain copes and daggers held in high honour, one of which was offered to him to carry. And yet again, when the Dean of Windsor published some verses in praise of the Virgin, ascribing to her

* In this and the following papers we have made considerable use of the recently published "Annals of Windsor," by R. R. Tighe and J. E. Davis, but still more of "Windsor in the Olden Time," by the Rev. J. Stoughton.



WINDSOR CASTLE, FROM THE RAILWAY STATION.

the power of forgiveness, the same excited opponent of the old superstitions tore down the paper from the choir door, to which it had been fastened by the very reverend composer. Once more, when a hymn to "our Lady" was sung in the chapel, he testified his protestantism by the indecorous introduction of a counter verse, the opposite of what had been just repeated.

There was also one Henry Filmer, who complained of the Vicar of Windsor's preaching, inasmuch as the latter had repeated idle and disgusting tales about the Virgin in the parish church. "So zealous to God's word was he, that he could not abide to hear the glory of Christ so defaced with superstitious fables."

Another name, that of Anthony Pierson, is associated with these. He was a popular preacher in Windsor, and in his sermons exposed the sacrament of the altar and the popish mass. Of course, he became an object of suspicion and dislike to the advocates of the old system, who set spies to watch him in his ministry, to take down notes of his discourses, to report who went to hear him, and to record what might be said by the people at the elevation of the host derogatory to the claims of the real presence. All was communicated to Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, and dark clouds began to gather over these Windsor worthies. One other ought to be named. John Marbecke was the organist of the Royal Chapel, and composer of some of the chants still used in our cathedrals; he was also the first to compile an English Concordance. The study of his Bible could not but enlighten him as to the errors of the Church of Rome; and, having expressed opinions in sympathy with the persons we have already mentioned, he, with them and another called Benet, had to appear before certain commissioners at Windsor, on Palm Sunday, after which they were committed to prison.

At length they were all tried at the sessions by a packed jury of farmers belonging to the college. The proceedings, reported by Foxe, are rather tedious, but they illustrate the idle charges brought against our reformers, the insufficient evidence on which they were condemned, and the bold language, as quaint as it was bold, and not always very proper, which they employed, but not without much excuse, against their ignorant and savage persecutors. Marbecke escaped, but the rest were doomed. Now the prisoners being condemned, says Foxe, "and had away, prepared themselves to die on the morrow, comforting one another in the death and passion of their master Christ, who had led the way before them, trusting that the same Lord which had made them worthy to suffer so for his sake, would not now withdraw his strength from them, but give them stedfast faith and power to overcome those fiery torments, and of his free mercy and goodness (without their deserts), for his promise sake, receive their souls. Thus lay they all the night long, till very dead sleep took them, calling to God for his aid and strength, and praying for their persecutors, which of blind zeale and ignorance had done they wist not what, that God of his mercifull goodness would forgive them, and turne their hearts to the love of and knowledge of his blessed and holy word: yea,

such heavenly talke was amongst them that night, that the hearers watching the prison without, whereof the sherife himselfe was one, with divers gentlemen moe, were constrained to shed out plentie of tears, as they themselves confessed."

The martyrs were lodged in the town gaol, which then stood in St. Alban's Street, near the Castle Hill.* Thence they were led down, on the Saturday after the trial, to the meadow under the north terrace, where Travers College now stands. "As the prisoners passed through the people in the streets, they desired all the faithful people to pray for them, and to stand fast in the truth of the gospel and not to be moved at their afflictions, for it was the happiest thing that ever came to them." Arrived at the stake, Filmer said, "Be merry, my brethren, and lift up your hearts unto God, for after this sharp breakfast I trust we shall have a good dinner in the kingdom of Christ our Lord and Redeemer." And Anthony Pearson, pulling the straw about him, laid a good deal thereof on the top of his head, saying, "This is God's hat; now I am dressed like a true soldier of Christ, by whose merits only I trust this day to enter into his joy." And so yielded they up their souls to the Father of heaven, in the faith of his dear Son Jesus Christ, with such humility and stedfastness, that many which saw their patient suffering, confessed that they could have found in their hearts (at the present) to have died with them."

Here, in this pleasant place, whither joyous parties now flock in the exuberance of their liberty, these three innocent persons were burnt to death, in open day, by the judgment of the law. It is a fact worthy of being remembered by all protestant visitors to the good town of Windsor. We know what may be said in palliation; we do not forget the bigotry of the times; but we must also express our indignation at a religious system which stimulated men to such atrocious proceedings, and has come down to posterity laden with the association of such crimes; inasmuch as by no act whatever on the part of its abettors, has that iniquitous system been purged from the stains of such enormous injustice and cruelty.

Things of the past, not so unfamiliar to the many, will be noticed in the visit we now propose to pay to the royal castle on the hill, though we shall be on the look-out for what commonly does not occur to local cicerones, or may not be found recorded in the guide-books.

We walk up the town till we reach Henry VIII's gateway—his own gateway, for he built it. It was erected in the first year of his reign, and the rose portcullis and the fleur de lis still decorating the front, are memorials of the Tudor origin of this stately piece of architecture. Once it was used for judicial purposes, for Stowe calls this gate the *Exchequer of the honour*, where had been, and yet continued, a monthly court, kept by the clerk

* George III caused it to be removed, and a new prison to be built, at the bottom of George Street. It is said that the monarch was induced to do this by the annoyance he received from the prisoners, who were in the habit of looking at him through the bars of their cells, when he came down from the Castle, and of crying out, "God save the King—God save the King; we wish your Majesty would let us out."

of the castle for the pleas of the forest. And here through this gate, then in all its freshness, came the gay, pleasure-loving monarch, in the pride of his youth, on removing with his court from Greenwich to Windsor. "Then began his progress," we are told by Hall and Holinshed, "exercising himself daily in shooting, singing, dancing, wrestling, casting of the bar, playing at the recorders, flute, and virginals, and setting of songs, and making of ballads;" and also "he did set two full masses, every of them five parts, which were sung oftentimes in his chapel, and afterwards in divers other places." In the eleventh year of Henry, on the eve of the feast of St. George, we find him, attended by a brilliant cavalcade, entering his castle, to celebrate the annual festival of the garter. "At the castle gate," according to Ashmole, "the ministers of the college received the king with procession: the king and knights of the order at the church door took their mantles and entered the choir, and stood before their stalls, till the sovereign had offered and returned to his stall." And so, as the sun is going down that evening, we see the royal train winding up through the quaint little town, crossing the drawbridge over the moat, passing under the archway of the embattled tower, met by richly attired ecclesiastics on the other side, and then knights and sovereign vanish within the porch of the noble chapel opposite, at that time fresh and bright with the masonry of his father's reign. Such shadows of by-gone days create pensive feelings, and serve to remind us how "the fashion of this world passeth away."

This gateway, too, is Henry VIII's in another sense. Here, tradition says, he came out to meet Anne Boleyn, when she entered the castle in the sunshine of his fickle favour, to be created, in the old presence chamber, a peeress of the realm, to wear the coronet of a marchioness, preparatory to putting on the diadem of a queen.

TRAVELLING DICK.

It is now nearly a hundred years since the summer of 1763, when Master Thomas Coulter came home on a holiday visit from his apprenticeship in Manchester. Thomas's father was a respectable farmer, and lived in an old-fashioned farm-house in the midst of his own fields, which stretched along a lone hill-side not far from the county town of Lancaster. There they sowed and reaped, baked their own bread, brewed their own ale, had Easter feasts, harvest homes, and merry doings at Christmas. Besides his good father and mother, there were two brothers and two sisters, all older than Thomas, some half dozen of servant men and maids, who, in the homely fashion of those times, worked together in house and field, and sat down together at the same table; yet Thomas was at once the gentleman and traveller of the family.

He had been named after an uncle who lived in Manchester, owned what were then called muslin-looms, and had no children. Thomas was generally considered a clever boy; and this well-to-do uncle had taken him two years before as an apprentice, to learn his trade of muslin-weaving; but it

was believed at home that if Thomas behaved well, he would be his uncle's heir. This was his first home-coming, and his fourteenth birthday came round next month; but the two years of living in a large town, seeing shops and stage coaches, cotton spinners and people who came from London, had made a great man of Thomas, not only in his own eyes, but in those of the whole farm-house.

Travelling was a tedious and expensive business at the time of our story. Goods were carried on pack-horses, country people rode in wagons, the roads were bad and frequented by highwaymen; so that honest families, like the Coulters, never went many miles beyond their parish church; and though Manchester was not then as large as one of its suburbs now, a boy who had lived there two years was thought to have seen the world. Besides, Thomas had seen the wonderful cotton trade; it was a new thing then in England. The good people of Lancashire were not sure that the cotton did not grow on the sheep they had in America; but it was brought in ships which came to Liverpool every half year, wind and tide permitting, carried up to Manchester on the aforesaid pack-horses, spun by women on large old-fashioned wheels, woven on the hand-loom, bleached or printed sometime within twelve months, and all articles made of it were more costly than silk is in our day.

Thomas could tell them how the cotton grew; for one of his uncle's men, who had been in the West Indies, told him it was planted and harvested just like their own beans. He had mighty tales, too, about the strong arms it required to card and rove the wool, when it came out of the closely-packed bags after the long voyage; how hard it was to spin into thread fine enough for muslin, and how his uncle's looms were stopped for want of yarn; by which the old man had a considerable loss, and Thomas a long holiday.

He was discoursing on those subjects one evening when work was done, and the family sat round the fire in their best kitchen, which looked so bright with its sanded floor and shelves of glittering pewter. Two or three old neighbours had dropped in to hear Master Thomas's news, and a young man of very humble pretensions, who went about the country as a travelling barber, mending wigs, which then formed part of every gentleman's attire and every farmer's Sunday dress, and buying hair to make new ones from all the poor girls who could be induced to sell it. He was always welcome at the farm-house; for, besides being quiet and civil, ready to repair the farmer's wig, however worn with time and service, the barber brought all the news of the country, and could tell how markets went for forty miles round. Now, he was listening to Master Thomas, like the rest, and none of them seemed more attentive; but when the family and neighbours with one accord began to lament the great loss which Farmer Coulter's brother must sustain by the stopping of his looms, the young barber, who was known through all Lancashire by the name of "Travelling Dick," said in a hesitating manner:—

"Master Thomas, I have been often thinking of your uncle's inconvenience for want of yarn. They

can't spin it fast enough, you see, and his are not the only looms brought to a stand by that: there is not a master weaver in Manchester who does not lose hundreds every year for want of yarn. That's what keeps cotton goods dear; yet I would venture to say, yarn might be made fast enough, and the finest muslins come down to half-a-crown or so a yard, if a certain machine I have been thinking and working at these five years were only set a spinning. But it takes money, Master Thomas, to get an engine properly made and put in working order. I am a poor man, and can't do it myself; but if two or three men of substance, like your uncle, were to subscribe a certain sum, the thing might be set going, and they would get their money out of it with good interest."

The family thought "Travelling Dick" must be losing his senses to talk in that fashion; but he was too deep in the business to notice the general surprise. Thomas was the travelled man, and the master weaver's probable heir; so he moved to his side, took out of his pocket a few small sticks and bobbins, which he called the model of his machine, set them up on the kitchen table, and began to explain how the spinning was to be done.

It is not easy for a boy to be listened to by a whole farm-house, without getting a little proud; and pride was the besetting sin of Master Thomas Coulter. He did not understand one of the mechanical principles which the barber laid down, but he had been used to see "Travelling Dick" carrying about a bag of hair or mending old wigs, and Master Thomas believed that was the only business he could do. The bobbins and sticks amused him mightily. How he would make his uncle laugh at the barber's machine for bringing the finest muslin down to half-a-crown or so. There was a knowing wink given to his brothers; they would take it out of Dick; and he pretended to listen attentively for some time, till the barber began to speak of driving his engine by water power, like a corn mill, when Master Thomas burst into a loud laugh of derision; his brothers followed his example; and they all began to chaff the barber, one advising him to take a farm and grow cotton on it, and another to make himself a pair of wings and fly to the moon. The poor young man had not expected such a reception for his invention, and was evidently much displeased.

He thrust his sticks and bobbins back into his pocket, would not be persuaded to stay for supper, and went away so much out of spirits that Farmer Coulter was vexed with his clever son, and the boys were told they must not talk of the machine when Dick came round again.

Twenty years is a long skip, but it will pass with all that live, and it did with Thomas Coulter. He had learned his uncle's trade, behaved well, and became the old man's heir. His uncle had woven out the web of life and left him the muslin-loom. "Travelling Dick" had never sought his patronage after that evening in the best kitchen, but the barber's machine had been a standing joke with him and his acquaintances. Thomas had other things to think of now. He was a man of thirty-four, with a wife and two young children to provide for. His

rent and taxes were heavy, bakers, butchers, and doctors had to be paid, and his looms were not paying him. Newer houses in Manchester could undersell his muslins and keep them out of the market. They had got up the new spinning frame invented by that man in Nottingham, whom the king had lately knighted, and people called Sir Richard Arkwright. Thomas had heard of the wonders it could do; he had seen it spinning; a wondrous engine of many wheels and spindles it was, all turned and driven by one great water-wheel, yet spinning the finest yarn in astonishing quantities, without the help of human hands, except to supply the raw cotton or to piece a broken thread.

"I must have a spinning frame," said Thomas, "cost what it will; there is no getting on in the old way; I can't command more than half the money to pay for one just now, but they say Sir Richard is a liberal man: perhaps if I went to Nottingham, told him my circumstances, and offered him proper security, he would let me have a frame, and pay for it when I could."

Thomas did go to Nottingham, and found the great inventor's office beset by men of greater wealth and standing than himself, but all in search of spinning frames. After waiting his turn, he was admitted to the room where the now important man sat, with every requisite for business round him, at a table covered with papers and plans, and assisted by two clerks. He received him courteously, but as a stranger; yet Thomas had seen his face before, and stood almost dumb with astonishment and shame too. The sticks and bobbins set up on the kitchen table had a meaning in them which he did not understand twenty years ago; for Sir Richard Arkwright, the inventor of the spinning frame, was none other than Travelling Dick. Need we say that Thomas returned home a wiser man than he left it, and with his organ of self-esteem considerably subdued.

THE MONTHS IN THE COUNTRY.

JUNE.

SPRING, in the fulness of her glory, melts into summer during the leafy month of June. In this month the fields and the woods put on all their greenery, and numbers of the early flowers of spring fade away or run to seed, while numbers more, buried alive in the tall grass and herbage, or overlapped by the abounding foliage of the bank, sink out of sight and notice. The hawthorn hedges now put on a rusty face, and every little bird that flutters through them shakes out the fading blossoms by thousands, and strews the pathways of the roadside and shady lane with their fragile forms. To the snowy hue of the blossom succeeds the unbroken hue of the full-formed leaf, and every hedge becomes a solid screen and rampart impenetrable to the view. And next come the summer flowers in the place of the spring blossoms; the dog-rose climbs over the fences, spotting them with its delicate flowers in all gradations of hue, from the purest white to tenderest carnation; the mallow, the white dewberry, and the yellow night-

shade peep out from verdant nooks; the honeysuckle and the eglantine send forth their fragrance; and in dells and glades, on banks and hedge-sides, the stately foxglove rears its tall pyramids of bells.

The leafing of the forest trees is now completed; even the oak has dressed his angular limbs in a bright green garb, and stands among his compeers conspicuous from the lighter hue of his vesture. The horse chestnut is not only in full leaf, but also in full flower, and disperses a tide of richest odours far and wide, from ten thousand upright cones of blossoms, showing like constellations in the dense green firmament of the forest background. The ash, though less conspicuous, flowers no less abundantly, and from every branch droop those clustering bunches of keys which are such a treasure and a mystery to childhood: the maple and the sycamore open their yellow florets, and among the twigs of the latter the cockchafer sleeps by day and drones with musical wing at eventide and night; the lime offers its treasures of honey to the working bees, and from dawn to dusk whole colonies of them are buzzing and humming over their incessant labours. The interior of the wood has now a rather monotonous appearance; for, with the exception of the light yellow foliage of the oak, and the dark black hues of the firs and pines, themselves tipped at the extremities of their branches with light green sprouts, all the trees of the forest are of one uniform shade of colour, and it is not easy at a distance to distinguish their several varieties. On the other hand, the surface of the soil is infinitely variegated with flowers of all hues and plants of all forms, and the busiest botanist has more work on his hands than he can hope to accomplish. The corn is now bursting into ear, the peas are in full bloom, and from the bean-field there is wafted an odour which justifies the assertion of the poet, that

"Arabia cannot boast
A fuller gale of joy than, liberal, thence
Breathes through the sense, and takes the ravished soul."

To add to all the charms of beautiful scenery, there comes in June the most delicious and exhilarating weather. The summer heats have not set in, and the clouds, which have not yet begun brewing their storms, send down soft and refreshing showers at intervals, filling the air with aromatic scents and a delicious balmy freshness. All nature is at this season a glorious pageant decked by a Divine hand, scattering bounty and beauty with equal abundance, and filling the world with evidence of His paternal care.

If the birds are for the most part in song in the beginning of the month—and that will generally be found to be the case—they will yet lapse into silence ere June is many days old. As for our friends the rooks, they have by this time, in most of their settlements, undergone their annual persecution, which so woefully thins their ranks and swells their rates of mortality. For, no sooner are the young rooks big enough to hop out of their nests and flutter from spray to spray, than a tribe of summer sportsmen, hungering for rook-pie, come down upon them some fine morning with their guns, and begin the

decimation of the young colony. It is but a dismal spectacle to witness this *battue* among a race who have not yet the right use of their limbs, or, therefore, a fair chance of escape; it is a sort of massacre to which, notwithstanding the savour of rook-pie, (and we confess a weakness in that direction,) we cannot accord our sympathies. The sight is too painful; the little fledglings, all unconscious of what is doing, hop about pertly and saucily, and seem to care nothing for the smell of powder or the whistling shot, and submit to their fate indifferently enough: but the agony of the old birds is distressing; they will not leave their young so long as the firing continues, but flutter and scream in circles above, testifying by their cries the bitter anguish they feel. Even if the young rooks are not shot down by the gun, they will get thinned by the village lads and schoolboys, who, first pelting them from the trees, will run them down and capture them by hand, while they are yet too feeble for a long flight. The rookery is now silent and deserted all the day long, both old and young birds being absent on foraging expeditions in all directions; their food is not now so plentiful as it was in early spring and during the time of incubation, and they have to wander far in search of it. About sundown you see them, like dim specks, near the horizon, making towards their home; soon the specks grow into a long sinuous train, then the dreamy caw-caw steals from far upon the ear, and grows and swells, as they approach, into a formidable din, which only subsides into silence when the last comer has settled himself for the night.

The silence of the song-birds at this season may be referred to the amount of business they have now upon their hands. Nearly all have young families to attend to, and whose wants *must* be supplied. With so many mouths to feed, they have no leisure for singing; they are grubbing about for larvæ, rummaging for caterpillars, or on the watch for worms, or in hot chase after insects, all the day long, and it taxes the utmost industry both of male and female to fill the ever-yawning throats of their little ones. True, there is one bird who pipes as lustily in June as at any other time—indeed, his note is then clearer and fuller than ever; but that is the rascal cuckoo, who, like a vagabond that leaves his children chargeable to the parish, has delegated his paternal duties to some unfortunate sparrow or finch, and, having no household to provide for, can sing while others are at work for him. The cuckoo is the nearest approach to a do-nothing "gentleman," to be found among the feathered tribes.

Perhaps the silence of the song-birds may also be referred to another cause: it is at this season that they are specially the victims of bird-fanciers, bird-dealers, fowlers, and mischievous boys and lads. Myriads of their nests are plundered and stolen from them every June, by these tribes of marauders, and the poor birds may well be silent while anxiously watching and tending their precious broods, with the consciousness that at any moment they may see them ruthlessly borne away. That they are thus conscious is pretty clear, from

the pains which most birds are at to deceive and delude their spoilers. Some will feign to be wounded or crippled, and will flutter away on one wing, until they have led the pursuer sufficiently wide of the object of his search. Others will carry food ostentatiously into a bush where there is no nest, and creep out silently on the other side. Others, again, when the spoiler is near, will affect ignorance of his approach, and delude him to the wrong place by the cunning of simplicity; while some will feign to be dead when taken. We look upon all these devices as so many rebuking protests against the wanton cruelty of mankind. The plundering of birds' nests is an act of gratuitous barbarism, which, resulting in no kind of benefit to any one, wants even the semblance of an apology. When the children of our land shall have received the benefit of sound moral training, they will recoil from the cruelty of such a pastime.

Down at Tanglely all hands are busy enough just now, and the homestead is full to overflowing. The work of the dairy goes on assiduously; out of doors the field hands are weeding the rising crops; turnips are being sown; and David the shepherd, busy among the sheep, who are threatened by the fly, is preparing for the washing, which comes off directly, and for the shearing, which will follow, if the weather is favourably warm, a few days later. This sheep-washing business is one of considerable bustle and merriment, especially among the boys and lads, who are eager to have a hand in it. As Dobbs prides himself on the quality of his wool, he takes care that it shall appear in good condition in the market. This would not be the case were it washed in a slovenly manner, according to the custom of too many of our midland county farmers. In order that it may be done well, Dobbs has it done with care and deliberation. The washing place is a pool of rapidly-running water, formed by a branch of the trout-brook, where the stream cascades over a pebbly dam into the hollow below, the bottom being of clear gravel and sand, without a particle of mud. On either side of the stream a space has been inclosed with hurdles; in one of these inclosures the sheep are driven to await their turn to be washed, and into the other they are suffered to escape as soon as the ceremony is over. Instead of one man to wash the sheep, as is sometimes the case, Dobbs stations three in the water. The first stands in the deepest part, up to his arm-pits; the second a few yards higher up, and submerged to the middle; while the third stands in the shallows under the fall. As the sheep are thrown in, they plunge first into the deep water, and get well sodden and tumbled about, with all but their heads under the flood, by the first washer; when they have parted with most of their impurities, they are passed on to the man in the middle, who repeats the process in cleaner water, and again passes them on to the third man, who, in this case, happens to be David himself, who gives them a final rubbing under the clear water which rushes over the fall, and then allows them to escape up the grassy bank on the other side, into the fold prepared for them. The muttens do not well know what to make of it, and ap-

pear sometimes to have barely strength to stagger out of the bath when the process is over; in fact, some of them with heavy fleeces have to be helped up the bank, and it is not until they have shaken out some gallons of water from their saturated coats that they are able to walk with freedom. The fun of the business is all on the side of the unwashed party, who generally manifest decided objections to the ablution; and it takes a sturdy boy to force a stout sheep over the bank into the flood. The trial of strength that sometimes ensues is not always in favour of the biped, and many a confident youngster is laid sprawling on his back in the struggle; and then it is that peals of laughter ring out on all sides, and the hills around echo to the boisterous merriment.

The shearing of sheep does not take place immediately after the washing. If it did, the wool would not be in a fit state for the purposes of the manufacturer, but would be hard and thready instead of soft and elastic. The sheep are kept in a dry clean spot for some days, until the natural oil of the skin again assimilates with the fleece: from five to seven days are sufficient for this purpose.

At Tanglely, the shearing always takes place in the big barn, which is cleared out for the purpose. As the shearers have to kneel at their work, Dobbs has compassion on their knees; first littering down the floor with clean straw, and then nailing tight over that, one of the canvas awnings used to shelter the hayricks. This makes a sort of cushion of the entire floor, upon which the men can work at their ease. The shearers are ranged round the sides, and each man, as he is supplied with a subject, commences operations by laying it on its back, and clipping away the short wool from the under part of the body. The shears used have sharp points, and are kept open with a spring, closing and cutting by pressure of the shearer's hand. They are dangerous-looking weapons, and in unskilful hands often inflict sad wounds on the poor sheep. When the under part of the animal is shorn, it is laid on its side, and the shears are worked rapidly beneath the wool, in repeated parallel traverses, beginning at the head and finishing at the tail, the operator holding the sheep in position with his left hand. One side being done, it is turned over, and the process repeated on the other, when the sheep is allowed to scramble clear of the fleece, which it will generally do without entangling or disturbing the wool, from which it has now been completely severed. The sheep submits to this operation with perfect quietness, rarely uttering even a plaintive bleat the whole time: when wounded by the shears it will wince, and shudder in every limb, but utters no sound. Such wounds do not arise so often from the unskilfulness of the shearer as from other causes; such as sudden and explosive noises, the report of guns, or the barking of dogs, which cause the timid animals to start, and thus render a wound almost inevitable. Dobbs, who is always present at the shearing himself, takes precautions against alarms of this kind, and will get his whole flock shorn, year after year, with nothing more serious than a scratch.

It is an odd sight to witness the meeting of the

shorn ewes with their wondering lambs, when they rejoin them in the barn-yard. For a time, the recognition is solely on the side of the mothers, the young ones not seeming at all disposed to acknowledge even an acquaintance with the grotesque figures that come limping and tottering towards them. The ba-a-ing, bleating, and odd growling noises that ensue before any satisfactory explanation is come to, is not easily described, but forms a most amusing scene.

As fast as the sheep are shorn, the fleeces are examined, and freed, as far as possible, from all foreign matter, and then stored away for the buyer when he comes round, or for the public market, if Dobbs should like that better. On the last day of the shearing, Dobbs gives a sheep-shearing supper in the big barn, when every hand on the farm gets his fill of good cheer. And if a stranger should come to Tangley on that day—or a dozen or a score of strangers—they will meet no Nabal there to refuse them the hospitalities of the season, but a right-hearted, cheery English farmer, ready and proud to do the honours of his homestead in a generous spirit.

Dobbs has hardly gathered his wool harvest before he begins to prepare for his grass crops and the hay harvest, which is now almost ready for the scythe. In the meantime, however, there is another harvest, which is specially that of the poor man, and to which we must turn our attention for a moment. This is the peat harvest, which, on the moors and highlands in the neighbourhood of Tangley, will be gathered by all and sundry who stand in need of it. What are the regulations under which the peat is dug in the district we do not know; but this we know, that if you cross Tangley Moor in June, you will come not only on peat-cutters scooping it out of the soil in strips half a yard deep, but on interminable rows of peat ready cut, and left to dry in the summer's sun. Dwellers in cities, and in neighbourhoods well supplied either with wood or coal, can form no idea of the value of peat as an article of fuel to those who cannot afford to purchase better. In the wild districts of Cornwall, in the secluded parts of Devonshire, in several of the midland counties, in many parts of Cumberland, of Yorkshire, and in Scotland, and in more places than we care to mention, peat, or turf, is the sole article of fuel to a large class of the population. In some districts it is supplemented with dried seaweed, and in others it is mixed with gorse and herbage, but in many it is burned alone, not only for purposes of warmth, but for cooking the meals of the family. The turf-cutter, as may be readily conceived, is obliged to be content with small gains: though there is a ready market for his staple among the poor, he must sell it cheap to sell it at all, as the consumer may go and cut it for himself. We have often seen women at this work, delving the sods with the turf-spade, spreading them to dry, and afterwards hawking them in baskets among the villagers; their gains, as we happen to know, are scarcely above the average of sixpence a-day.

Down at Tangley brook, the trouts are feeding ravenously at this jovial season. The caddis-fly is

on the water during nearly the whole of the month, and you cannot go near the bank without hearing the fish plunging after them twenty times in a minute. The extent to which master trout will indulge himself in this dainty fare is not generally suspected. Some years ago we took a pound trout out of this identical stream, and, to gratify our curiosity on this score, we took the liberty, ere introducing him to the gridiron, of submitting his very elastic stomach to a close examination. We found within that well-stored magazine upwards of four hundred caddis, or May-flies, almost entire, together with a semi-digested mass of the same material, equal to at least a thousand more. The unavoidable inference was, that this plump and sportive trout had eaten, at the lowest calculation, some fifteen hundred of the May-flies before it came to his turn to be eaten himself.

Just now, there are a good many quiet anglers stealthily at work in the shady nooks and close coverts of the bank. These are Dobbs's personal friends, to whom he has granted the right of fishing, and who come and go at the farm as they please, taking pot-luck if they happen to look in at dinner-time, or pic-nicking it at the brook side on the cold provisions stowed away in their wallets. Cousin Brown has been there for a good part of the month, off and on, now running off per train to London for despatch of business, and now back again to Tangley for despatch of trout. He has not invited Podgers, not being favourably impressed with that gentleman's notions of sport, and doubting his patience and prudence in the delicate business of fly-fishing.

Throughout the month of June, the May-fly is the favourite bait for the trout; there is, however, one fly which has for them still more attractions: this is the oak-fly, better known among west-country rustics under the name of the up-and-down. This is one of the most beautiful and curious insects of the season, and must be sought for on the trunks of old oaks or elm trees, not in the deep gloom of the woods, but in the outskirts, as it loves the sun. It is of graceful shape, about two-thirds of an inch long, with transparent wings of the same length, and has a plump yellow body striped laterally with black bars. It flies round the trunks of old oaks or elms, at the height of four to seven feet from the ground, and settles every few minutes. In settling, it alights on the bark invariably with its head upwards, and as invariably, after resting thus for about two seconds, swings round on one leg and hangs with its head downwards for several minutes. In this position it is easily taken with the fore-finger and thumb, as one would take a pinch of snuff; but it will certainly escape if any attempt be made to catch it before it swings round on its heel. It is this singular mode of settling itself which has given it its country name.

In concluding our notice of this month, we may advert to the fact that this year Whitsuntide occurs in the middle of it, and that then, as usual, the country clubs and benefit societies have their annual meetings and processions. There is no great difference between such anniversaries in the country and in the city. The chief points of dissimilarity

are the processions of women, who in rural districts have their clubs as well as the men, and who walk in white dresses and bare-headed, being followed by the men, the flags, banners, and bands of music separating the two parties; and the fact that the country processions move on to church instead of the public-house, and listen to a sermon before they sit down to dinner; at least such *was* the good old custom. The subsequent convivialities are pretty much the same, though in the country they will close at an earlier hour. We may add, that the Whitsuntide festival is in many districts also a kind of spontaneous flower-show, in which the growers of flowers, and especially of ten-week stocks, make extraordinary efforts to outrival each other. The stocks are worn in the button-hole; and we can safely aver that we have in times past seen such colossal and monster specimens of these majestic flowers in the breast of many a rustic, as we have looked for in vain in the proudest horticultural shows of horticultural London.

And now let the glorious month of June fade out, amidst the odour of the rich clover and the fragrance of ten thousand flowers; while the soft shadows of evening come over the scene, and the brook babbles at our feet, the rooks caw in the distance, the droning beetle hums in our ear, and high up in the north-west, where the hills and woods blend together in one deep purple hue, suddenly the weary day-god flashes out from the crimson clouds that curtain his rest, and for a moment

"The glory of sunset opens
The highway by angels trod,
And seems to unbar the city
Whose builder and maker is God."

RECENT BOOKS ON ITALY.

At a time when so melancholy an interest is universally felt in the destinies of Italy, it may be useful to notice some books which have recently been given to the world, presenting the observations of intelligent witnesses unbiassed by political animosities, and written amidst the scenes which they describe.*

These works have the advantage, not only of being the most recent, but also of being written in an impartial spirit, and with much acuteness of observation and vivacity of style. We will present a selection of extracts from them, tending to show the present condition of the States to which they refer, and thus distinguished from those numerous works which heretofore have chiefly dwelt on their historical antiquities, and the classical associations which cluster about every region of the Italian peninsula. We find in one of the volumes named, the following suggestive intimation of the state of things under the Neapolitan government.

"Happy indeed is ignorance in this land; happy he who knows not how to read, or who is known not to use the knowledge. He may sleep in peace, he need not

fear being wakened up at dead of night to answer the call of a police inspector, come to see what are the books he reads, what secret thoughts he has written down in his papers. He will not have to excuse himself for not having opened his door fast enough, and he need not explain that sleep alone caused the delay. He need not sit for hours praying to heaven and all its saints for patience, whilst with the insolence of office, and the impunity of power, the man of the police frowns and ominously says:—

"Signore, what is this? a book with the portrait of a man with a beard? do you not know that beards are republican and forbidden?" The victim does his best to keep down his hot Italian blood, and remembering under what government he lives, he replies quietly:—"Signore, I am not answerable for either beard or portrait; this is a historical romance, and the man has been represented in the costume of the times: every man then wore a beard."

"Vain excuse, which only further rouses police wrath. The inspector indeed does not stand upon ceremony; he tears the portrait out of the book and turns his attention to another volume, where, as misfortune will have it, he finds another portrait with a beard longer than the first. Dire is his fury, but in the main it ends with another execution: a second portrait is destroyed. And now the papers must be examined. The victim is learned, the police inspector is ignorant, the examination of the manuscripts, the explanations of all that the inspector cannot understand, proves an endless, a sickening task, and thus the whole night was spent, for we speak of real not imaginary facts. And it was dawn before the victim, a gentleman, a man of learning, and a priest, was left in pence. This took place in Naples."

With relation to the condition of Tuscany, before its recent revolution, and the influence it may exert in the impending struggle, the following observations are not uninteresting.

"Tuscany, it is true, with barely 2,000,000 of inhabitants, constitutes but a small section of Italy, which counts a population of 25,000,000; but the part which this petty state may enact, in the event of an insurrectionary movement throughout the land, will certainly exercise a powerful influence over the destinies of the Italian peninsula. For Tuscany, small though it be, is far from an insignificant province of Italy, embracing as it does several cities and towns of considerable importance—Florence, Pisa, Sienna, Lucca, Leghorn, Pistoia, and Arezzo, and thus it possesses a power and influence far beyond what it would derive from its limited population and extent of territory. For cities, important and influential in every country, are especially so in Italy; in them are concentrated the entire wealth, intelligence, commercial enterprise, and intellectual activity of the provinces. Were it not for Milan and Venice, Lombardy would lie supine beneath the iron heel of Austria; the destiny of the states of the church depends on the will of Rome, and Naples gives the law to that kingdom of which it is the metropolis. Everywhere in Italy cities dominate; it is only by their power that tyranny, domestic or foreign, can or will be overthrown.

"Judging from the past as well as from present indications, Tuscany will not remain inert if a struggle for freedom should begin in Northern Italy. The people, united by a common band of grievances proceeding from the same source, will join in the cry of 'Down with the Austrians,' and the first cannon shot from the fortress of Milan will be echoed from the ramparts of Florence."

Public interest, however, is at this time directed in a great degree towards Piedmont, and the following observations of Signor Gallenga convey the latest intelligence, and, excepting on the fortune of war, the safest criteria of its future destiny.

"No doubt there is very perceptible improvement in Piedmont. Our youth at Turin, if they walk slowly, at least have a tolerable straight manly bearing; and

* A Summer and Winter in the Two Sicilies. By Julia Kavanagh. Hurst & Blackett.

Life in Tuscany. By Mabel Sharman Crawford. Smith, Elder & Co.

Country Life in Piedmont. By Antonio Gallenga. Chapman & Hall.

although the number of dwarfs and cripples is still something appalling, yet the young men seem to shoot up taller, and the young women to bloom forth lovelier, since the air of freedom is swelling the lungs of the former, and fanning the cheeks of the latter. It may be mere fancy; but I really believe I see better features, healthier colours, rounder forms, better 'blood,' as the Italians say, among the rising generation, than I can conjure up from my reminiscences of Piedmont a quarter of a century ago. What a contrast, my friend, between this bustling, thinking, out-speaking, self-conscious people of Turin—with all the faults I have been finding—and the heavy population of that dreary Milan, which the Austrians are stupifying, brutifying, by main force! No doubt the contrast assures me that there is in Piedmont astonishing progress, and if we go on at this rate with faith and courage, we cannot fail to work out our thorough regeneration."

The more promising social prospects of Piedmont are thus foreshadowed by the same author:—

"Industry in Piedmont is yet in its infancy; no man can say to what results capital and intelligence aided by freedom may lead it. The mountains are rich, besides, in mineral wealth, of which, I believe, no living man can tell the amount; with the single exception of the all-important coals, I think there is hardly any of the precious metals that may not be found in large quantities in the bosom of the subalpine valleys. To say nothing of gold, which was so plentiful in the time of the ancient Salapi and the Romans, in the lands of Aosta and Ivrea, and some veins of which are still open in the Val Auzasca, in the Val d'Orc, and in Savoy, iron, copper, and other more useful metals abound, though but a small portion is now brought to light. The old counts and dukes of Savoy pursued mining industry with an eagerness which slackened under their less enterprising royal successors. Many people are now turning their attention to the subject, and search is only impeded by that great evil which delays the development of all industry in Piedmont, the lack of capital. Very excellent quarries of granite and other rock and stone are in full activity at Pont, at Andorno, and all over the mountain region. This trade will be multiplied a hundred fold, in proportion as railway and other communication enables the miner to send his material to the capital and to other towns, where streets and houses alike need it."

M. Gallenga continues:—

"Truly the middle ages would seem to cling to this poor Italian land with perverse tenacity. I met, not many months ago, at Genoa, an American skipper, who had sailed with his fine clipper in six-and-thirty days from New Orleans, and had been above forty days landing his cargo, such being the condition of the harbour of that famous 'Queen of the Mediterranean,' owing to the want of docks, wharves, and jetties, that every bale of merchandise has to be hauled from the ship into a boat and rowed to shore, thrown upon the beach, then carried on the shoulders of the caniailli facchini or porters, to the custom-house. What Genoa was in the palmy days of the Anac of Chioggia or of the Crusades, that she is at the present day, and the shocking condition of her harbour is not so much the consequence of the universal neglect and decline into which everything Italian is suffered to fall—for Genoa is still young and fresh, and full of life and spirits—as of some narrow-minded considerations for the interests of the carriers, (who would deem themselves ruined if any human contrivance were to supersede their usefulness as the merest beasts of burden); and of jealousy on the part of the owners and masters of some of the lesser craft of the country, who would dread competition with the large shipping of other nations, were the port ever so secured against wind and wave, and ever so well furnished with conveniences for loading or unloading, as to give a fair choice between it and any other civilized harbour. I know my friend the Yankee captain protested that, for the future, he would take his wares to Marseilles, to

Trieste, to any place rather than to a country in which naval matters are hardly more advanced than among the South Sea Islanders.

"The matter of the great Ligurian seaport, however, like so many other evils which had been suffered to attain gigantic dimensions in Piedmont, is attracting the attention of the present Sardinian government, and bills are in readiness for the prolongation of the moles of Genoa, so as to render the port completely land-locked, for the removal of the royal navy to the Gulf of Spezzia, and for the construction of suitable commercial docks in the Darsena, or wet docks and other places left vacant by the men-of-war and arsenals. The rivalry of Trieste on one side, and of Marseilles on the other, is of so great moment at the present emergency, that either Genoa must cease to exist, or she must rise to a far greater importance than she ever attained in the epochs when she triumphed over Pisa, and brought Venice herself to the greatest straits. The whole Eastern trade—so materially increased since the opening of an overland route to India, and destined perhaps to attain a far wider scope if the scheme for a canal through the Isthmus of Suez is ever realized—must needs find its way either from Trieste, over the Sömmerring, or from Marseilles, through France, or else from Genoa, over Mont Cenis, the St. Gothard, or the Luckmanier, to the Atlantic and the German Ocean. The tunnel of the Alps, between Modere and Bardonnèches, across Mont Cenis, is already in contemplation; and a bill to that effect is going through both Houses of Parliament at Turin at the present moment; whilst intelligent persons are weighing the respective advantages of the Luckmanier and the St. Gothard, to decide upon the route which is to unite the Mediterranean with the Rhine. For the good success of all these undertakings, it is chiefly important that the harbour of Genoa, naturally one of the most spacious, most deep, and most accessible in the Mediterranean, should be in proper trim; and Heaven grant that the efforts of a provident free government may be crowned with success, and that the remedy to so inveterate an evil may not come too late!

"Most assuredly, in the future prospects of Genoa, not merely Liguria and Piedmont, but the whole of Northern Italy, Switzerland, and Germany, and more especially England, are vitally concerned. It would certainly not, so far as I can see, be for the good of Great Britain that all the Eastern trade should be engrossed by either of the great powers of France or Austria. The time has come, I believe, in which England should strain every nerve to establish a line of communication, which, beginning at Genoa, should come up to the Lago Maggiore at Arona, from Arona should cross the Alps, either above Cairn into the upper valley of the Rhine, or above Altdorf into the Lake of the Four Cantons to Lucerne; then should come down to the Rhine at Basle, and follow the course of the stream as far as Cologne to the Dutch ports and the Belgian railways. It might then be easy to form a commercial league, in which Piedmont, Switzerland, the minor German states of Baden, Darmstadt, Nassau, and Bavaria and Prussia, no less than Belgium and Holland, should be invited to enter, and of which Great Britain should take upon herself the leadership and protectorate."

Since these paragraphs were penned, every social and commercial prospect of Piedmont has assumed an altered phase. All are overshadowed by the gathering cloud of war, and no mortal eye can foresee the results of what threatens to be a universal and protracted storm. Amidst the portentous scenes which are shifting with the critical events of every week, the hope of the civilized and christian world can only repose on that benignant Providence, through whom alone there can arise from the darkness which now overspreads the Continent of Europe, the dawn of an assured liberty, a progressive civilization, and a pure and earnest faith.